

TRUE TALES OF YESTERYEAR

In recent correspondence from an old 'perfiner' not only was a perfin that was previously unidentified now been identified, but also can be related the usage of the perfin machine, the stamps and a realisation of just how many perfins were used daily.

The die is C8550 (CW/SL 8,13/10,7 4½), and it was used by Charles Wright and Son Limited, Wine and Spirit Merchants of Wirksworth, Derbyshire. The perfin machine was a one die hand operated machine and I am informed that it was the only one ever used by the business, unfortunately the manufacturer of the machine remains unknown. The stamps were perfined principally for postal usage but some saw service as receipt stamps on paid invoices. From 1920 to 1925 the "office boy" perfined large quantities of ½d, 1d and 6d stamps, this following on from the established pattern of the previous 'office boy' who had then moved up in the business employee world. Subsequently on the hoisting of the postal rates the following 'office boy' also added some 2d and 1/- 'but these were only used in very small quantities'.

The process of perfinning is described as 'We used to line up six sheets, and stick them together by the top gummed margin. Then tore them in strips lengthwise downwards, the perforator just accepted a thickness of six stamps'.

During the mentioned period the quantities of stamps utilised for postage are stated as follows:

½d. - Large quantities, generally 2000 to 5000 every day on circulars and price lists to retailers and wholesalers, this being the printed matter and unsealed postage rate appertaining.

1d. - far less in quantity, generally 20 to 40 daily on ordinary nail.

6d. - these must be rare as often weeks went by without this value being required for postage.

Later the 2d and 1/- stamps were perfined but found to be only necessary in the same quantities as the 6d's.

From those details of application of the stamp bearing the GW/SL perfin it is a wonder that they are not as prolific as the latter day PAC, but in six years of dealing in perfins I have not come across one! Those of you with this item in your collection can now this brief history of the perfin which was related to me by the octogenarian "office boy" J. C. Brailsford in his letters, after all these years he has now taken up perfin collecting.
